United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General deplores incident in Mogadishu on Sunday in which seven Nigerian soldiers serving with UNOSOM II were ambushed and killed; Quick Reaction Force soldiers conduct cordon-and-search operation early this morning of suspected Aideed-controlled area.

+ Secretary-General proposes that Security Council define required security and safety conditions when establishing peace-keeping operations; suggests that General Assembly adopt declaration to heighten international commitment to safety of United Nations personnel.

+ Fifth Committee recommends $256 million appropriation for UNOSOM II from 1 May to 31 October 1993 and up to $200 million for UNPROFOR from 1 July to 30 September; approves draft resolution on review to improve efficiency of budgetary aspects of peace-keeping operations.

+ UNHCR signs agreement providing access to all refugees in South Africa; to assist in voluntary repatriation of 300,000 Mozambican refugees beginning next year.

+ DPI's forty-sixth annual Conference for NGOs to begin tomorrow at Headquarters on theme of "Social Development: A New Definition for Security".

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has deplored the incident on Sunday in which seven Nigerian soldiers serving with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) were ambushed and killed in Mogadishu. Ten other members of the contingent were wounded. They had been in the process of taking over a checkpoint from the Italian contingent when they came under attack.

In a statement issued today, the Secretary-General said UNOSOM II had been successful in maintaining a relatively secure environment throughout

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Somalia, but that this had proved difficult in south Mogadishu, where one faction was determined to frustrate the efforts of the international community and continued "to carry out deliberate and unprovoked acts of violence".

The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Jonathan Howe, said on Sunday that the attackers were clearly supporters of General Mohammed Farah Aideed and his Somali National Alliance (SNA). The change-over between the two units, planned and organized by the Italian contingent, had been well known to the people in the area and the attack had been "unprovoked and premeditated".

The UNOSOM II military spokesman announced today that soldiers from the United States Quick Reaction Force augmenting UNOSOM II conducted a cordon-and-search operation early this morning of a suspected Aideed faction command and control compound. They searched about 12 buildings, confiscated some small weapons and detained 17 of the two dozen Somali militia who were there. There were several exchanges of small-arms fire. Two Aideed militia and two United States soldiers were wounded. There were no civilian casualties and no reports of collateral damage.

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In a report on the protection of United Nations forces and personnel, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has suggested that when the Security Council sets up a new peace-keeping operation, it define the security conditions under which the operation is to be deployed. In the report, dated 27 August, the Secretary-General proposed the following measures: confirmation that the Government of the country hosting an operation is obliged to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel; clarification that the arrangements made also apply to contractors and personnel of non-governmental organizations working with the operation; and reaffirmation that the use of force against United Nations personnel will be considered interference with Security Council responsibilities.

Futhermore, the Secretary-General suggested that the General Assembly adopt a declaration drawing attention to the critical importance of security and safety of United Nations forces and personnel, to strengthen international awareness and commitment in that regard.

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The Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) has approved a draft resolution by which the General Assembly would appropriate some $256 million for the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) from 1 May to 31 October 1993. In a series of actions taken without a vote on Friday, the Committee also recommended that the Assembly commit up to $200 million for United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) operations from 1 July to 30 September. By that resolution, the Assembly would also appropriate $55 million for additional start-up requirements for the enlargement of the Force in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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In addition, the Fifth Committee took action on the financing of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II), and the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The Committee also approved a draft resolution by which the budgetary aspects of of peace-keeping operations would be reviewed urgently to improve efficiency.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Government of South Africa yesterday signed an agreement allowing the UNHCR to protect and assist all refugees in that country. Since the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 1991, UNHCR's role in South Africa had been restricted to the repatriation of South African refugees, and some 300,000 Mozambican refugees will be among the first to benefit from the new agreement.

UNHCR has been negotiating to gain access to all refugees in South Africa since 1986, especially to the Mozambicans who represent the majority of the refugee population there. The signing of a peace agreement in Mozambique in October 1992 has made possible the return of more than 1.5 million Mozambican refugees from neighbouring countries. The operation will take at least three years and cost $200 million, of which $12 million will be allocated to the voluntary repatriation of refugees in South Africa, which is expected to begin next year. South Africa also hosts an undetermined number of refugees from other countries in the region and other parts of the world.

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More than 1,000 representatives from 38 countries are expected to attend the forty-sixth annual Conference of the Department of Public Information (DPI) for Non-Governmental Organizations, to be held at Headquarters from tomorrow through Thursday. Among the issues they will discuss are social integration, the alleviation of poverty and productive employment.

The theme of the Conference is "Social Development: A New Definition for Security". Those scheduled to speak include Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and DPI Assistant-Secretary-General Marco Vianello-Chiodo. The Conference will also hear a taped address by Juan Somavia, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the 1995 World Summit for Social Development and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations. The Conference will bring together representatives of professional and business associations, trade unions, religious, youth and women's organizations and other voluntary groups from around the world.

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